

Sir John McKenzie KCMG MLC



Born in October 1839
at Ross-Shire Scotland
Died at Heathfield
Palmerston in
August 1901

Sir John McKenzie was truly an amazing man. He not only left his mark on the East Otago district but helped bring about changes that would affect New Zealand for generations to come. He was born in Scotland, the second eldest in a family of ten children.

During his young years he witnessed two events:- when he was 6 or 7 years old, at Glen Calvie he saw thirty families thrown out of their houses by the landlord to make room for flocks and herds. At 16 there was an incident when farmers' wives refused to obey eviction orders at Strathcanorn. Thirty five constables arrived from Fort William and Dingwall and the women were brutally beaten.

There is little doubt that these memories were, in part, responsible for Sir John's passion for the reform of land ownership legislation.

Sir John had a long and interesting political career and was well known as a passionate battler for his causes.

In addition to his political career he was well skilled as a stockman and farmer.

He was knighted in 1901 and died not long after.

There is a grand Memorial to him in the Palmerston Cemetery.

Sir John McKenzie Trail



- Notice Board
- 1 Boer War Memorial
Sir John McKenzie Plaque
 - 2 Appleby's
 - 3 The Athenaeum
 - 4 Centennial Park Foot Bridge
 - 5 The Great War Memorial
 - 6 Puketapu Summit Track Start
 - 7 Sir John McKenzie Monument
 - 8 Lookout

Heritage Trails

Palmerston Gateway to Gold Heritage Trails



Sir John McKenzie Trail

the Real
Discover \ New Zealand

Sir John McKenzie Heritage Trail



The Boer War Memorial

In front of the Railway Station is a monument which was sculptured in Italy and cost one hundred and fifty one pounds. On it are recorded the names of six soldiers who died in the Boer War.



J H Appleby

Photographer and
Cycle Agent



Mr Appleby established his business in 1898. The shop was run as a cycle and fancy goods business. The original building burned down and was replaced by the present one around 1914. He also had a photographic studio situated near the Presbyterian Church. Mr Appleby was born in 1869 in London where he was educated. He was well known in musical circles as a cornet and violin player and was the band master of the Palmerston Brass Band (1890) and also organised an orchestra. Mr Appleby's grandsons Doug and Des still run the business today.

Palmerston Athenaeum

The original Athenaeum building which occupied a site opposite the Railway Station was erected in the 1870's.



Although the present building has the date 1872 it was in fact built around 1930. Through the efforts of the late Sir John McKenzie as Minister of Lands, the institution was endowed with a land grant from which a revenue of thirty two pounds per annum was derived.

Centennial Park

Showing the footbridge. The steel structure the bridge is built on is from one of the Shag River gold dredges.



There were four gold dredges working on the Shag River in 1898. One dredge yielded 638 ounces of gold in 1899. Two of the dredges continued working until 1904 when the operation ceased.



The Great War Memorial

Pays tribute to the locals who gave their lives serving their country in world war 1 and world war 11.

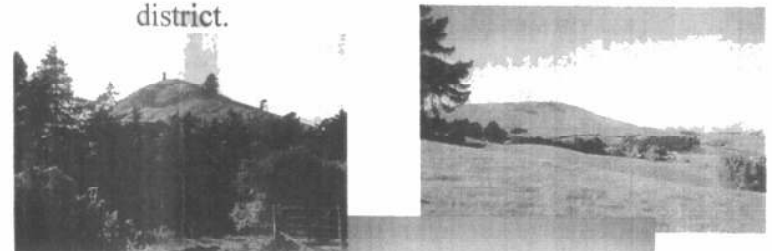
Puketapu Cairn

In 1902, the year following Sir John McKenzie's death, the Dunedin Gaelic Society built a 19 metre cairn across the river on Pukehiwitahi above the McKenzie's Heathfield property. The sandstone monument later collapsed. Money was approved for its repair in 1916, however nothing was done until the new cairn was erected on Puketapu in 1931. This cairn is built of blue stone and is 13 metres high with an internal steel stairway and ladders, leading up to a viewing platform. Not a place to be if there is a strong wind blowing.



Every year in October there is a race to the top Puketapu and back. The race is named Kelly's canter after the policeman who during World War II included coast watching among his many duties, and regularly 'footed it' up to the top of Puketapu to spy out the broad ocean. This race attracts scores of runners every year. By 1981 the race record was down to the remarkable time of 17 minutes 46 seconds.

The Lookout offers some spectacular views over Palmerston and the surrounding district.



Take advantage of the seats and relax before returning to the town centre

